

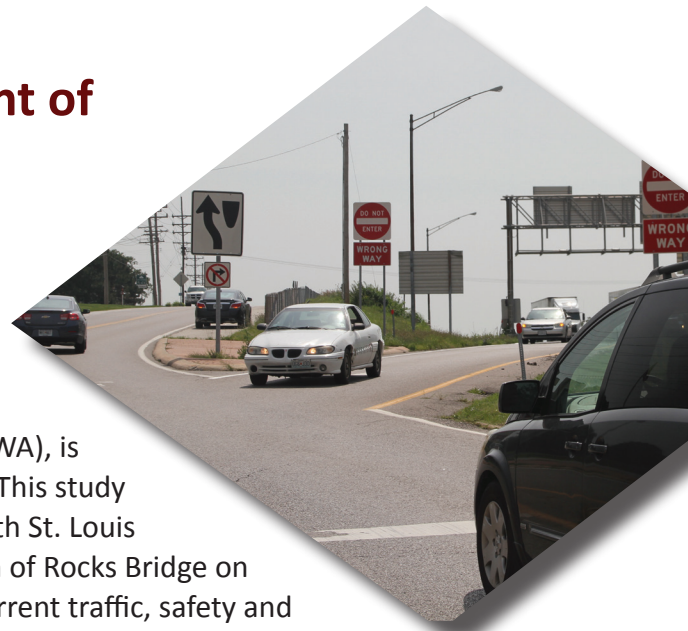


Newsletter

Issue #1 - Summer 2013

I-270 Focus of Missouri Department of Transportation Study

Congested and closely-spaced interchanges. Confusing entrance and exit ramps from I-270 to Dunn Road. Poor access for pedestrians and bicyclists. Aging infrastructure. These are just some of the problems the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is addressing in the I-270 North Environmental Assessment. This study is the next step in planning improvements for I-270 in North St. Louis County from the I-70 interchange on the west to the Chain of Rocks Bridge on the east. If nothing is done to upgrade the corridor, the current traffic, safety and infrastructure conditions will continue to worsen.



The I-270 North Environmental Assessment follows the I-270 North Corridor Study, which was a feasibility study that was completed in late 2012. The feasibility study identified numerous operational and safety issues as well as proposed preliminary short-term and long-term strategies for improving I-270. These strategies included: maintaining and improving existing two-way outer roads; creating a one-way outer road system; and improving several stand-alone interchanges. The I-270 North Environmental Assessment will build on the work conducted during the feasibility study by developing alternatives and analyzing them for their potential environmental impacts. These impacts include:

- Natural (noise, parks, wetlands, rivers/streams, and hazards);
- Cultural Resources (historical sites); and
- Human (the affect on neighborhoods, communities and municipalities).

Once the impacts are identified, recommendations will be made for avoiding, minimizing or mitigating them.

Get Involved!

We need your feedback throughout this study. Tell us: your experiences when traveling I-270 in North County; what potential environmental impacts we need to consider; and what you think of our proposed alternatives when we present them. Also, if you would like the study team to make a presentation to your organization and/or neighborhood group, please contact us.

VISIT: www.modot.gov/stlouis/I-270North.htm

EMAIL: SL270NorthEA@modot.mo.gov

CALL: 1-888-Ask-MoDOT

Flexibility Also Focus of I-270

With static transportation funding and increasing costs, MoDOT is considering the implementation of non-traditional, innovative, construction contracting tools for this I-270 project. Innovative contracting methods will provide the ability to accelerate project delivery, reduce cost, improve quality, reduce impacts to the traveling public, and maximize value for our customers.

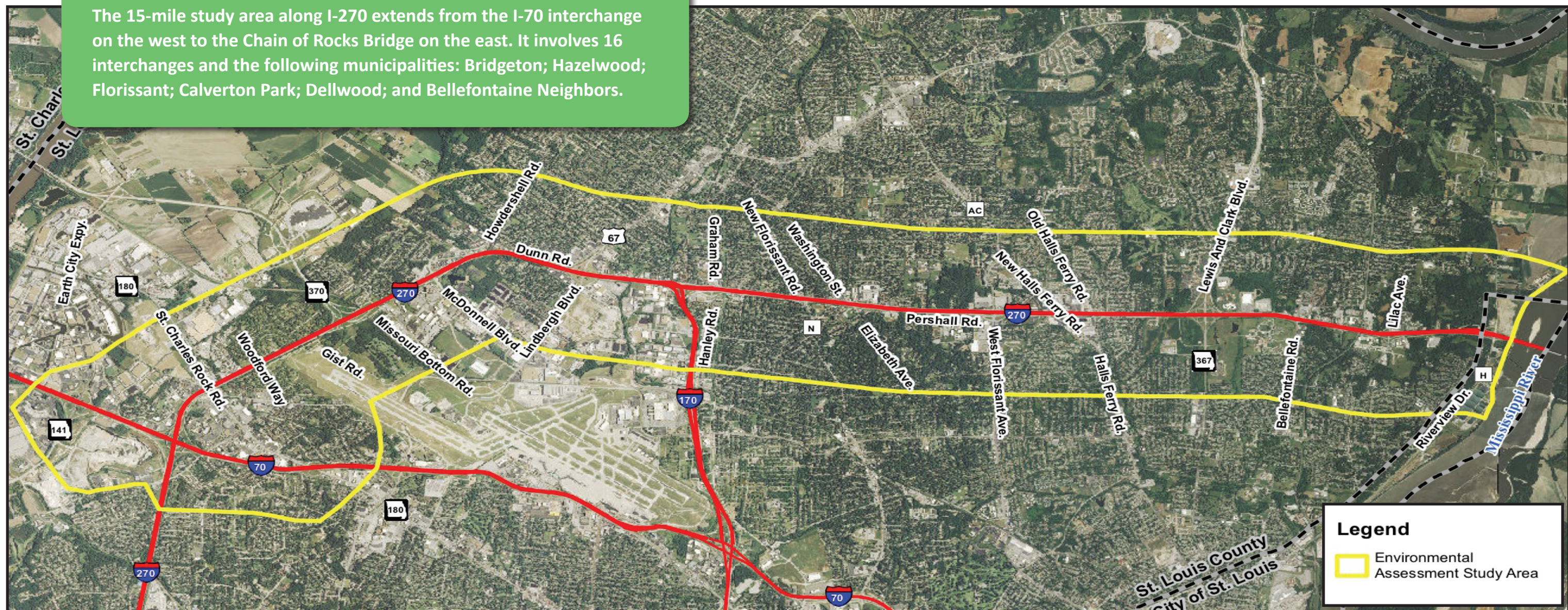
While the environmental assessment for this project will identify a “preferred alternative” for improving this portion of I-270, the final design of the improvements will be determined by ensuring adherence to a thorough set of Functional requirements (goals, constraints, needs, and desires) and Performance requirements (engineering-oriented statements of what the facility or component must do). We value your input on the Functional and Performance requirements that would be appropriate for the I-270 corridor.

STUDY AREA MAP

The 15-mile study area along I-270 extends from the I-70 interchange on the west to the Chain of Rocks Bridge on the east. It involves 16 interchanges and the following municipalities: Bridgeton; Hazelwood; Florissant; Calverton Park; Dellwood; and Bellefontaine Neighbors.

Project Timeline

The I-270 North Environmental Assessment will last 18 months. The study will conclude with FHWA reviewing the final environmental document. It will then issue either a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or require that the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). An EIS is required when a proposed alternative is expected to have significant environmental impacts. Assuming a FONSI is issued by FHWA, we can advance to the design stage once funding is secured.



Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this study being conducted?

I-270 is a vital commuter and commercial corridor that connects five interstates and several other routes in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. The study will address safety, mobility, congestion, accessibility and aging infrastructure. These issues will continue to worsen if nothing is done. Lastly, upgrading traffic operations, safety and access will allow the North County community to leverage the improvements to encourage economic revitalization.



What is an Environmental Assessment?

An environmental assessment studies and documents the possible impacts a proposed transportation project may have on the environment. It is a requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). NEPA ensures that decision makers consider the environmental, social and economic impacts when deciding whether or not to move forward with a project. Considering such impacts early in the planning process allows for them to be avoided, minimized or mitigated.

Is there funding available for improvements?

Currently, there is no funding available for design, right-of-way or construction. However, the environmental assessment is necessary to be eligible for federal funding. Additionally the study team plans to design alternatives that will allow for innovative contracting methods. This flexibility allows potential contractors to identify the best solutions to accelerate the project's delivery, reduce cost and improve quality. It also ensures that the North County community will receive the best value for every tax dollar it invests in Missouri's transportation system.

What aesthetic enhancements will be part of this study?

Aesthetic enhancements will be part of upgrading I-270 but the specifics of what and where will not be identified in the I-270 North Environmental Assessment. These details will be part of the design phase. At that time, MoDOT will work with municipalities to consider baseline aesthetic enhancements for the bridges – such as Lindbergh Boulevard (Route 67); I-170; New Florissant Road; West Florissant Road; New Halls Ferry Road; and Route 367 – that are cost effective, can be reasonably maintained and do not compromise safety. As much as possible, the improvements should complement the surrounding area. If municipalities along the corridor desire aesthetic improvements beyond what MoDOT can provide, then they will have to supply the additional funding.



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www.modot.gov/stlouis/I-270North.htm